Exposing Russia’s Network of Influence.

This article is a translation of the original publication, which can be found at the following link:
https://drukarnia.com.ua/articles/vikrittya-rosiiskoyi-merezhi-vplivu-NCCsy

How “anti-cult activists” became a tool of Russian influence to incite discord and destabilize the work of European and Ukrainian intelligence agencies.

Why has their persecution of the international civic platform “ALLATRA” become one of the most telling examples of this scheme?

Attacks on synagogues and mosques as the key to the entire scheme: how Russian intelligence funded attacks on French places of worship

Serbian court rulings revealed that Russian intelligence funded the desecration of synagogues and mosques in France. The facts set forth in the court documents speak for themselves. **Three Serbian citizens, arrested in late 2025 and brought to trial in Smederevo, confessed to participating in two planned waves of desecration in the Paris area**.

The first occurred in May 2025, when three synagogues were doused with green paint—a color associated with Islam—during the Jewish Sabbath. The second occurred in September, when severed pig heads were placed in front of nine mosques

in Paris and its suburbs. **Both actions were intended to shock, humiliate, and stoke tensions between religious communities.**

The Serbian court rulings clearly state that **the group received "orders, instructions, and money" from "structures of the Russian Federation's intelligence service."** The court noted that **the goal was to "incite religious and national intolerance" and "destabilize the situation" in France and Germany.** [1], [2]

Court documents regarding the attacks on religious sites in France clearly show that **Russian intelligence agencies use religious hatred as a cheap and strategically precise tool for destabilizing Europe**: to create religious unrest, force European security services to expand protection of potential targets, and divert counterintelligence resources away from countering Russian activities.

French intelligence **obtained internal Kremlin documents** indicating **that the Russian presidential administration "directly approved" the desecration of Jewish monuments in May 2025**. The French intelligence report states that **"the [Russian] presidential administration seeks to heighten tensions** between these two communities on [French] territory, **using contentious debates to sow discord** in French society **and weaken national solidarity"** [1]**.**

Stirring up tension between the Jewish and Muslim communities, green paint on synagogues, pig heads at mosques, photographs as proof of work for a client—all **of this is cheap to carry out and extremely costly for the state,** which is forced to protect hundreds of potential targets.

Andrei Soldatov, an investigative journalist and **expert on Russian intelligence**, **explained the logic behind such attacks:** they force European security services to redirect resources, expand the list of sites requiring protection, and increase the overall costs of counterintelligence. **The attacks do not necessarily have to be spectacular or even successful;** they are intended to instill fear, uncertainty, and additional administrative pressure. According to Soldatov, this is a way to "raise the costs" for countries supporting Ukraine [1], [2].

> Original: "It distracts counterintelligence resources from dealing with Russian activities while raising security costs in general—as a punishment for staying on the Ukrainian side in the war."

> *Translation: "This diverts counterintelligence resources from combating Russian activities while simultaneously raising overall security costs—as a punishment for remaining on Ukraine's side in the war" [1].*

This phrase is the central key to the investigation. Russia does not merely launch missiles, conduct cyberattacks, and carry out hybrid operations. It **forces democratic countries to expend energy and resources on fabricated internal conflicts.**

• In one case, this involves **the desecration of places of worship**, which breeds fear, interfaith tension, and an additional burden on law enforcement agencies.

• In another, it involves **inciting society against religious minorities and civic initiatives by labeling them "sects**": this stigma creates an image of an internal

enemy, sows intolerance and division in society, and then this artificially created fear is used to promote norms and laws that benefit Russian influence, which, in turn, expand the scope of suspicion, give anti-cult "experts" access to government decision-making, and shift the focus of the security services from real channels of Russian influence to artificially created "internal threats."

• In the third scenario, **criminal and administrative cases, inspections**, **and searches are initiated**, which divert law enforcement agencies from actual Russian agents and force the state to expend resources on fabricated threats and predetermined targets within society.

The anti-cult network serves as a ready-made personnel, ideological, and media infrastructure for such operations.

The Serbian connection makes this link particularly telling. One of the key figures in the case, **Momčilo Gajić—the leader of the Serbian group that organized riots in France and Germany on the orders of Russian intelligence**—is described in public records as a man closely associated with Serbian church circles; **his closeness to Bishop Irinej Bulović of Bačka and to the inner circle of Porfirije** (currently the Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church) **is** also **evident**. **It is precisely this Serbian church-anti-cult milieu that has for years operated in ideological alignment with the Russian anti-cult movement**—led by **Alexander Dvorkin** (president of RACIRS) and Moscow Patriarchate priest **Alexander Novopashin** (vice president of RACIRS): joint conferences, shared platforms, and common rhetoric about "sects," "destructive cults," and "spiritual security." *(Details of this episode will be revealed later.)*

** Alexander Dvorkin is a Russian "cult expert" and one of the key ideologues of the Russian anti-cult network. He is the founder of the St. Irenaeus of Lyons Center for Religious Studies, established in 1993 under the auspices of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as the president of RACIRS—the Russian Association of Centers for the Study of Religions and Sects. Through RACIRS, the church- missionary structures of the Moscow Patriarchate, and international anti-cult platforms, Dvorkin built a network of influence in Russia, Ukraine, Europe, and beyond; From 2009 to 2021, he served as vice president of the European Federation of Centers for Research and Information on Sectarianism (FECRIS) and later remained in its leadership. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has criticized the Russian anti-cult movement led by Dvorkin as a factor exerting pressure on religious minorities and a threat to freedom of conscience.*

** RACIRS—the Russian Association of Centers for the Study of Religions and Sects—was established in 2006 as a network of Russian anti-sectarian centers. Its president is Alexander Dvorkin, and its vice presidents are Archpriests Alexander Novopashin and Arseny Vilkov; the organizational and ideological core of the network is the Center of St. Irenaeus of Lyons. RACIRS unites and coordinates church-missionary, apologetic, and anti-sectarian structures associated with the dioceses of the Moscow Patriarchate, as well as centers and partner organizations outside Russia.*

* Alexander Novopashin is a protopresbyter of the Russian Orthodox Church, one of Alexander Dvorkin's closest associates, and a key figure in the church-anti-cult milieu. He is vice president of RACIRS and a corresponding member of FECRIS;

associated with him is the Missionary Department of the Novosibirsk Diocese, which serves as a prominent church-affiliated anti-cult center and a platform for publishing materials against “sects,” “destructive cults,” and certain civic initiatives. Novopashin participates in international anti-cult conferences, and he has also promoted the anti-cult agenda through training and lectures for law enforcement and security agencies, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Investigative Committee, and the FSB.

A brief summary of the investigation

Russian intelligence agencies have a strategic interest in operations designed to incite hatred both within countries supporting Ukraine and directly within Ukraine itself.

One of the tools of this strategy is the anti-cult network, with its experts, media connections, and contacts in law enforcement circles. Wherever anti-cult activity appears, the same political function emerges: to divide society, incite hatred, force the state to respond with force, and incur additional costs due to threats that are either imaginary or fabricated by the network.

This pattern is evident in several countries.

In the Serbian-French case, the organizers and associates of the suspect Momčilo Gajić are linked to the pro-Russian church-anti-cult milieu in Serbia, where Alexander Dvorkin and Alexander Novopashin were active and regularly spoke [1], [9], [11], [12], [94].

In Latvia, figures linked to pro-Russian networks and suspected of working for Russian intelligence were simultaneously involved in promoting Dvorkin and the anti-cult agenda in Europe: Tatiana Zhdanok, Andrei Mamikin, Evgeny Elkin, Nikita Nikiforov [6], [7], [8], [89], [90], [91], [92], [93].

Also **in Lithuania, Nikolai Ryzhak, a** former high-ranking **KGB officer and Russian deputy who, along with Dvorkin and Mizulina, supported the idea of a repressive fight against "destructive sects," was named by the Lithuanian side as a person inciting discord, spreading disinformation, and posing a threat to national security** [13], [14], [15], [16].

In Ukraine, even before the full-scale war, anti-cult activist **Pavel Broyde appears in Surkov's correspondence as a participant in projects aimed at dividing Ukraine,** federalization, media influence, and working through religious structures [18], [19].

Against this backdrop, **the activities of Ukrainian anti-cult activist Irina Kremenovskaya** no longer appear to be merely a private endeavor. Her ties to the Russian anti-cult infrastructure, her partnerships and published collaborations with antisekta.org and Russian resources, the support for her activities from the Novopashin website (the website of the Missionary Department of the Novosibirsk Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church), her endorsement of Alexander Neveev (a Russian anti-cult activist with radical anti-Ukrainian rhetoric), and the long-standing joint participation of Kremenovskaya and Russian anti-cult activists in the campaign against the international civic platform "ALLATRA"—all these factors come together to form the same mechanism: under the guise of protecting society from "sects" and fabricated internal threats, a rift is created in society, pressure is exerted

on government agencies, and government officials and the media are drawn into the implementation of an informational and legal narrative that benefits Russia [24], [29], [30], [31], [32], [33], [34], [35], [38], [39], [40], [41], [42], [43], [59].

For Russian intelligence agencies, it is critically important not merely to spread disinformation, but to draw the enemy's government agencies into this disinformation. In a wartime context, this is a direct blow to national security: agencies are distracted from real sabotage, espionage, child abductions, collaboration, cyberattacks, and war crimes.

Let me remind you that the French case illustrates this logic in its purest form: **the provocation costs little, but the state's reaction costs dearly** [1]. The Ukrainian "ALLATRA" case demonstrates the same logic through anti-cult tactics: labeling, media attacks, expert opinions, dozens of raids, years of trials based on fabricated charges, and the international discrediting of an actor acting in Ukraine's interests.

Serbia — France: Russian intelligence, Momčilo Gajić, and the Serbian church-anti-cult network

According to Forum 18, a group operating in France and Germany from April to September 2025 carried out paid assignments: the operatives had their travel and accommodation covered, were promised 1,000–1,500 euros for each action carried out, and photos from the sites of the attacks served as proof [1]. **The group was led by individuals identified as M.G. and "Hunter." M.G. was identified as Momčilo Gajić (),** who was later found in Moscow [1]. Balkan publications reported that **Moscow had granted asylum to the leader of the Serbian group** [10], [94].

Gajić's Moscow trail is significant not only as a geographical point of refuge. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty identified the location of his photograph in Moscow: the Church of Saints Peter and Paul, the representative office of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Russia. In the photograph, **Gajić occupies a prominent position during a church ceremony**. [10], [94].

In publicly available materials, Gajić is portrayed as a person closely associated with the Serbian church and anti-cult milieu. For instance, earlier, **on May 22, 2023,** a solemn celebration of the church's patronal feast took place **at the Church of the Ascension in Novi Sad (Serbia)**, where **Gajić served as the chief patron of the feast**—the "patron of the feast"— and **the service was led by** one of the most influential representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the anti-cult community—**Bishop Irinej (Mirko) Bulović of Bačka** [10], [94].

It is noteworthy that **in 2012,** Irinej Bački, together with Porfirije (the current Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church), opened an anti-cult event in Novi Sad—**the 5th meeting of the Inter-Orthodox Conference of Centers for the Study of Religious Movements and Destructive Cults**. The proceedings of this meeting **list Alexander Dvorkin and Alexander Novopashin as speakers,** and among the announced topics are "the fight against destructive cults," "totalitarian sects," and "pastoral work against totalitarian sects" [9].

Another connection leads **from Gajić to Porfirij** via the Kovilje Monastery. In 2017, Momčilo Gajić spoke about himself on the YouTube show "The Life of a Gamer," where he was presented as an employee of a company involved in esports [10], [94]. The episode was filmed in the courtyard of the Kovilski Monastery near

Novi Sad, and **Gajić** himself **stated that he had stayed there in 2012 and 2013** to "recover from gaming addiction" [10], [94].

This detail is important because the Kovil Monastery is associated with the same anti-cult church milieu. The monastery is home to the "Land of the Living" church community, which treats addictions through prayer [10], [94]. It was founded "with the blessing" of the aforementioned Bishop Irinej of Bačka and reached its peak during the period when the current Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Porfirije (Jovan) Pavlović, served as abbot of the monastery [10], [94].

Through Porphyry, this thread leads back to the Russian anti-cult. **In 2017,** an international conference **on the creation of an inter-Orthodox educational program on sectarian studies** was held **at St. Tikhon's University in Russia**: **Alexander Dvorkin** participated on behalf of St. Tikhon's University**,** and among the representatives of the local Orthodox Churches was Metropolitan **Porphyry** of Zagreb and Ljubljana [11], [12].

Here is an excerpt from the speech of the then-Metropolitan Porphyry:

> *Original text from the Novosibirsk Diocese website: "It is important that Professor Dvorkin, whom the entire Orthodox world knows as a learned fighter against sects, participate in this educational program. We place our hope in the strength of the Russian Orthodox Church" [12].*

Later, **in 2021, the website of the Novosibirsk Diocese's missionary department**, associated with Alexander Novopashin, wrote about Porphyry's election as patriarch

and **explicitly emphasized that he has long been familiar with anti-cult issues, participated in FECRIS conferences and other anti-cult forums**, and that his interest in this topic "has never waned" [12].

** FECRIS is the European Federation of Centers for Research and Information on Sectarianism; an international anti-cult organization that brings together specialized centers and experts from various countries. Alexander Dvorkin, one of the key ideologues of the Russian anti-cult movement, served as FECRIS's vice president for a long time (from 2009 to 2021). Following the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, FECRIS faced criticism from Ukrainian scholars and religious studies experts, who pointed to the federation's ties to the Russian anti-cult network and appealed to French authorities to cease their support.*

Against this backdrop, the court testimony of Serbian citizen Filip Petrovich, who pleaded guilty in the Franco-Serbian case, carries particular weight. Regarding Gajic, he stated:

"I know that Momchil's nickname is 'Kaluger' (note: meaning 'monk' in Serbian), and that ***he is closely linked to the Russian special services. I do not know if this is the intelligence service of the Russian Federation, but I understand that his goal is to destabilize the political situation in*** *Europe"* [1].

Thus, the Serbian-French case reveals a two-tiered structure. The first tier is a court-documented operation involving funds and instructions from Russian intelligence agencies [1]. The second layer consists of Serbian operatives and the

figure of Gajić, linked to the Serbian-Russian anti-cult church milieu, where Porfirij, Irinej Bački, Dvorkin, and Novopašin had long intersected on the topic of combating "sects" [9], [11], [12].

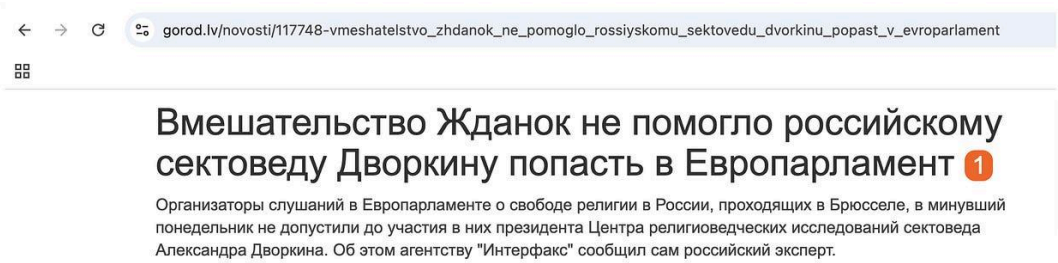
The French-Serbian case demonstrates the social and ideological milieu through which the Russian network was able to recruit personnel for operations aimed at inciting hatred.

Latvia: The FSB, Pro-Russian Politicians, and the Anti-Cult Network

The Latvian case demonstrates how the anti-cult network penetrates the European sphere not only through church channels but also through politics, political parties, and MEPs.

Tatjana Ždanok, **a** longtime **MEP from Latvia** and a representative of the pro-Russian political sphere**, was at the center of investigations into ties with the FSB.** In 2024, The Insider published reports **about her alleged work for Russian intelligence**; the European Parliament launched an investigation following these reports, and the Latvian Security Service initiated criminal proceedings [89], [90], [91].

Zhdanok is identified as a person involved in promoting Dvorkin in Europe: some publications explicitly describe her attempt to intervene in the matter of admitting the Russian "Sectologist" to the European Parliament [6], [97].



The same source quotes her public statement that the only people at the table whom she knew for certain were or had been FSB officers were Vladimir Putin and Sergey Naryshkin [6].

Alongside Zhdanok in the Latvian political and anti-cult sphere were **Andrei Mamikin, Evgeny Elkin, Nikita Nikiforov, and others** associated with the "Latvian Russian Union" party and the anti-cult movement.

Mamykin, a former Member of the European Parliament from Latvia, opened an anti-cult conference in Riga in 2018, attended by Alexander Dvorkin and Luigi Corvaglia—an Italian member of FECRIS who later actively opposed "ALLATRA" in Europe [7], [8]. **In 2023,** the official Latvian Security Service **opened a criminal case against Mamikin for publicly glorifying Russia's crimes in Ukraine; in 2024, Latvian media reported that the Security Service sought to prosecute him** [92], [93].

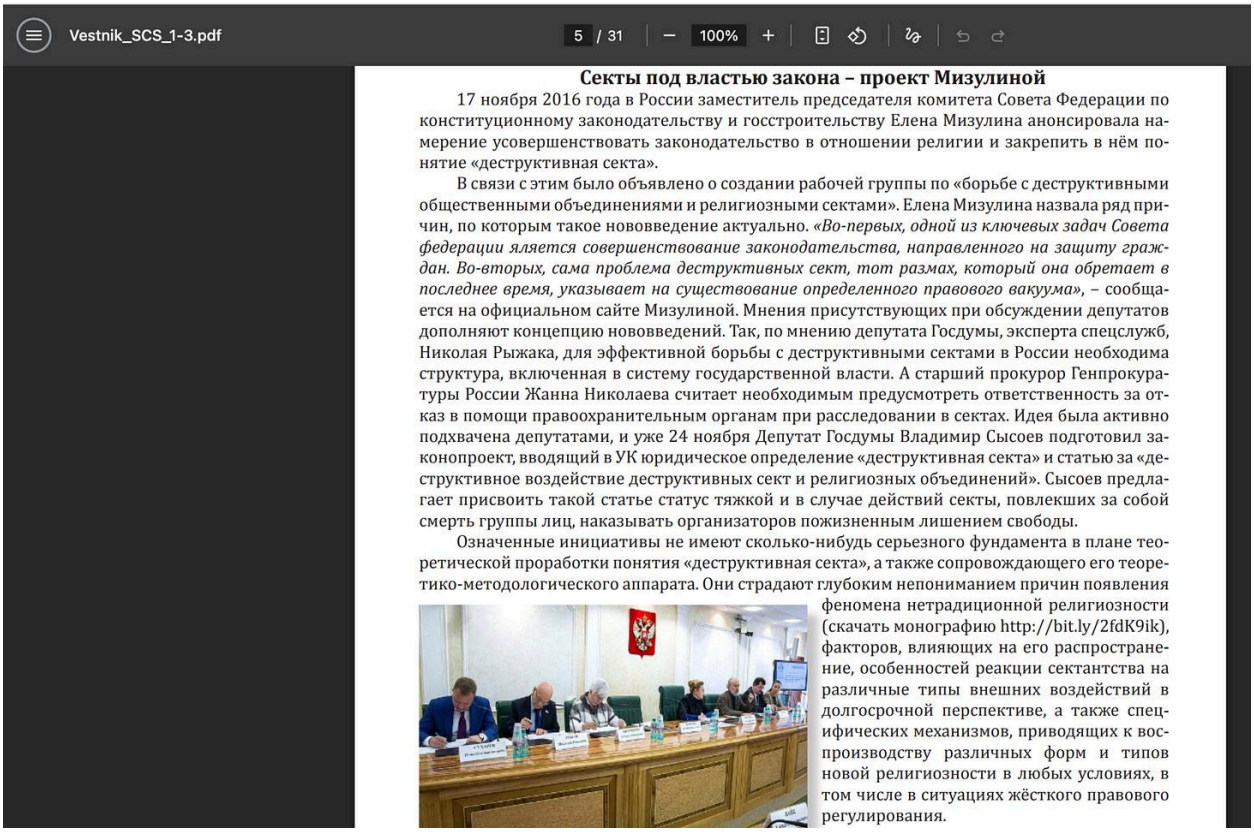
The conclusion regarding the Latvian case is fundamental: **those involved in the anti-cult agenda were individuals who simultaneously espoused pro-Russian political positions, collaborated with Dvorkin and FECRIS, participated in**

European conferences, and many of whom became the subject of investigations and criminal proceedings related to Russian influence and the justification of aggression [6], [7], [8], [89], [90], [91], [92], [93].

Lithuania: Ryzhak as a Formula—Former KGB, Incitement of Discord, “Sects” as a Foothold for the Authorities

The Lithuanian case reveals yet another facet of the same pattern. Nikolai Ryzhak is **a former KGB officer and Russian lawmaker whose background includes service in military counterintelligence and work in security agencies** [16], [17].

In 2016, in the Federation Council of the Russian Federation, Elena Mizulina convened **a roundtable on introducing the concept of a “destructive sect” into legislation. Among the participants were Alexander Dvorkin and Nikolai Ryzhak**; the same event was separately documented in the anti-cult publication *Bulletin of the Synodal Center for Sect Studies* [13], [98].



In the photo: Ryzhak (second from left) and Dvorkin (fifth from left)

The SOVA Center noted that Ryzhak supported the idea and explicitly recalled Soviet practices of controlling religious associations [13].

> *Ryzhak's original quote: "In our state security system, there were departments for religious associations that monitored the activities of sects. Their 'cells'—ready-made 'cells' for subversive work in the interests of other states. Change the direction slightly, replace the leader—and you have a ready-made underground with which you can undermine the foundations of any healthy society!" [13].*

This is the view of a security service official regarding religious and civic associations as potential targets for operational control. Following this logic, any independent community can be declared a “cult,” then portrayed as a “cell” of foreign influence, and subsequently used to expand the state’s powers. **It is precisely this logic that Dvorkin and RACIRS have promoted in Russia for years and exported through international anti-cult networks [**3], [13].

In 2019, Lithuania proposed banning Ryzhak from entering the country. The Lithuanian Foreign Ministry’s response stated that, **after reviewing Ryzhak’s statements, the Lithuanian side shares the view that he incites discord, spreads disinformation, and that there are grounds to consider him a threat to Lithuania’s national security** [14], [15].

Delfi also described Ryzhak as a former KGB agent who “sows discord and poses a security threat” [15].

The connection here is direct: **the man whom Lithuania viewed as a threat to national security for inciting discord was simultaneously active within Russia as a proponent of expanding the fight against “destructive sects” alongside Dvorkin and Mizulina** [13], [14], [15].

Ukraine: The Dvorkin–Broide–Surkov Axis

The history of the anti-cult movement in Ukraine does not begin with Irina Kremenovskaya. Before her, the Dvorkin–Pavel Broyde axis was active. In materials on Surkov Leaks and in analytical reports on Russia’s hybrid war**, Broyde appears as a figure linked to projects aimed at destabilizing Ukraine: federalization,**

media networks, regional portals, a pseudo-environmental agenda, engagement with religious organizations, and the purchase of influence in the media [18], [19].

Even before the formal establishment of RACIRS **in 2006, Dvorkin and Broyde were building the "Dialog" network of anti-cult centers in Eastern Europe.**

In 2002, at an anti-cult conference in Vinnytsia, with the support of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church– Moscow Patriarchate and Ukrainian government agencies, **the Eastern European Center "Dialogue"** was established**: Dvorkin became its president, and Broyde its executive director.** Later, Broyde established Ukrainian satellite centers and **operated through an Orthodox anti-cult agenda**, which **was formally presented as protecting society from "sects," but in reality gave Moscow leverage over Ukraine's religious, media, and legislative spheres** [18], [19].

The essence of Surkov's correspondence *(Note: the leaks consist of three parts. The emails were taken from the accounts of Surkov himself, his assistant, and the leader of the Kharkiv Communist Party, Alla Aleksandrovskaya. In total, there are about 4,000 emails covering the period from 2013 to 2015.)* **lies in the fact that the anti-cult and religious environment was used not as a subject of religious studies, but as an element of hybrid warfare**.

Broide proposed ideas and managed programs to implement the Kremlin's plans, and also proposed a media architecture: analytical websites to legitimize pro-Russian narratives, military portals for demoralization, regional portals to foster separatist

sentiments, and pseudo-nationalist websites to sow division even within the patriotic audience. He proposed buying influence in Ukrainian media and using religious structures as platforms for influence [18].

Particularly telling is the Zaporizhzhia episode described in a pro-Ukrainian analysis of Russia's hybrid war. In the Zaporizhzhia region, Broyde proposed that the Kremlin promote a strategy of regional federalization under the guise of a local civic agenda. Various "hooks" were considered for the region: historical—through the memory of the Zaporizhzhia Sich—economic, and environmental. Ultimately, the environmental approach was chosen: Zaporizhzhia, as an industrial region with real environmental problems, was to receive "special status" ostensibly to address them [19].

This was the very essence of the operation. Under this banner, which bore not a hint of the Russian tricolor, the Kremlin secured significant support for what appeared to be a local issue: tens of thousands of signatures were collected and submitted to the Ukrainian parliament, and rallies and roundtables were organized. To the public, this appeared to be a local issue: concern for the air, people's health, and the future of an industrial region. But functionally, this initiative served as a preparatory step toward a political goal beneficial to Moscow: weakening central authority and promoting the idea of special status for the region [19].

This example is important for understanding anti-cult activities as a whole. Russian influence does not necessarily come head-on—with direct pro-Russian slogans or overt anti-Ukrainian rhetoric. Much more often, it enters through what appears to be beneficial, local, or even patriotic: protecting society, "protection from cults," child safety, religious "expertise," and so on. On the outside - public concern.

Inside-managed conflict, division, pressure on institutions, and an outcome that aligns with the enemy's scenario.

Therefore, this episode is important not only as a story about Broida and federalization. It reveals a method: a person involved in the activities of an anti-cult network finds themselves drawn into projects of hybrid warfare, where outwardly benevolent initiatives are used as a cover for the enemy's actions. The anti-cult network has already participated in operations aimed against Ukraine's territorial integrity. It has already effectively used themes such as "the fight against sects," "religious security," and "protection of society" as a cover to create division within the country.

This means that future anti-cult initiatives in Ukraine cannot be judged solely by their names and public declarations. In wartime, it is especially important to look at the results: who is designated as the internal enemy, what divisions are being created in society, what decisions the state is being pushed toward, what resources are being diverted from the services, and whether the outcome aligns with Russia's interests.

This is precisely why the Ukrainian anti-cult framework, even when it speaks the language of "protecting society," "patriotism," and "combating threats," requires special attention. Broide's experience shows that an initiative that appears beneficial on the surface may not be a solution to the problem, but rather a step into the enemy's scenario. In this logic, "sects," "religious security," and "protection of society" become not terms of religious studies, but political tools of hybrid warfare [18], [19].

The Ukrainian model of freedom of conscience as a target

Ukraine differs from Russia and Belarus not only in its political course. Ukraine has developed its own model of religious freedom—a model of pluralism close to the American approach: the state does not designate “right” and “wrong” religions, does not create a hierarchy of “traditional” and “non-traditional” groups, and does not turn minorities into objects of suspicion. It is precisely this model that Ukrainian religious scholars Lyudmila Filipovich, Viktor Yelensky, Anatoly Kolodny, Alexander Sagan, and others have defended [20], [21], [22], [23].

> *Viktor Yelensky: “The enemies of Ukraine are also enemies of religious freedom” [20].*

Filipovich clearly articulated the value of the Ukrainian path: without freedom of religion, all other freedoms lose their meaning. She emphasized that Ukraine is neither Russia nor Belarus, but an independent country with a tradition of religious pluralism, where **there has never been a single dominant church, and where the demand for “one church, the rest out” is madness and ignorance of history** [22].

Yelensky separately noted Ukraine’s uniqueness: **there is no main church, no recognized or unrecognized churches, and confessional diversity prevents any single force from suppressing minorities** [23].

It was precisely this circle of Ukrainian scholars that opposed FECRIS and its pro-Russian ties after the start of the full-scale war. 82 Ukrainian scholars asked France to cease its support for FECRIS (*note: A. Dvorkin had been vice president of*

FECRIS since 2009 and served on the board of directors until 2023); international NGOs appealed to U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken demanding that the pro-Russian anti-cult organization be excluded from UN forums [4], [5], [84]. These letters mentioned Filipovich, Yelensky, Kolodny, Sagan, and others—that is, those who defended the Ukrainian democratic model of freedom of conscience.

On the other side of this divide is Iryna Kremenovska. As early as 2019, she publicly criticized these scholars, accusing them of "lobbying for the interests of the newest religious organizations," effectively casting doubt on the very principle of equal legal status for religious minorities [24], [25], [26]. In her text, the Ukrainian model, which is similar to the American one, was described as excessively liberal, and European countries with state-sanctioned or privileged "traditional" religions were cited as alternatives [24].

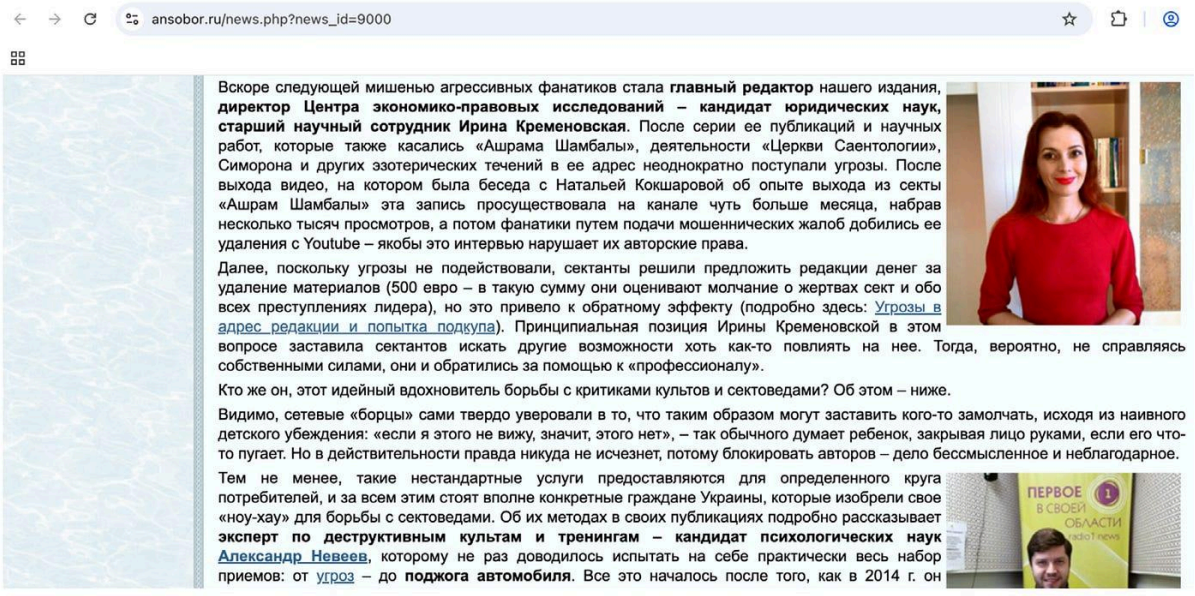
In the Ukrainian context, this is not an abstract debate. For Moscow, it is not the Ukrainian model of equality that is advantageous, but the model of suspicion: "traditional" versus "non-traditional," "the Church" versus "sects," "our own" versus "outsiders." In Russia, this is precisely how the repressive system against religious minorities was built, as documented by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) [3]. Therefore, an attack on Ukrainian religious scholars and on Ukrainian religious pluralism is an attack on one of the fundamental elements of Ukrainian democracy.

Kremensvska: The Ukrainian Face of the Same Anti-Cult Scheme

Iryna Kremenovska publicly positions herself as an independent Ukrainian anti-cult activist, but her connections and the consequences of her work lead back to the same Russian infrastructure.

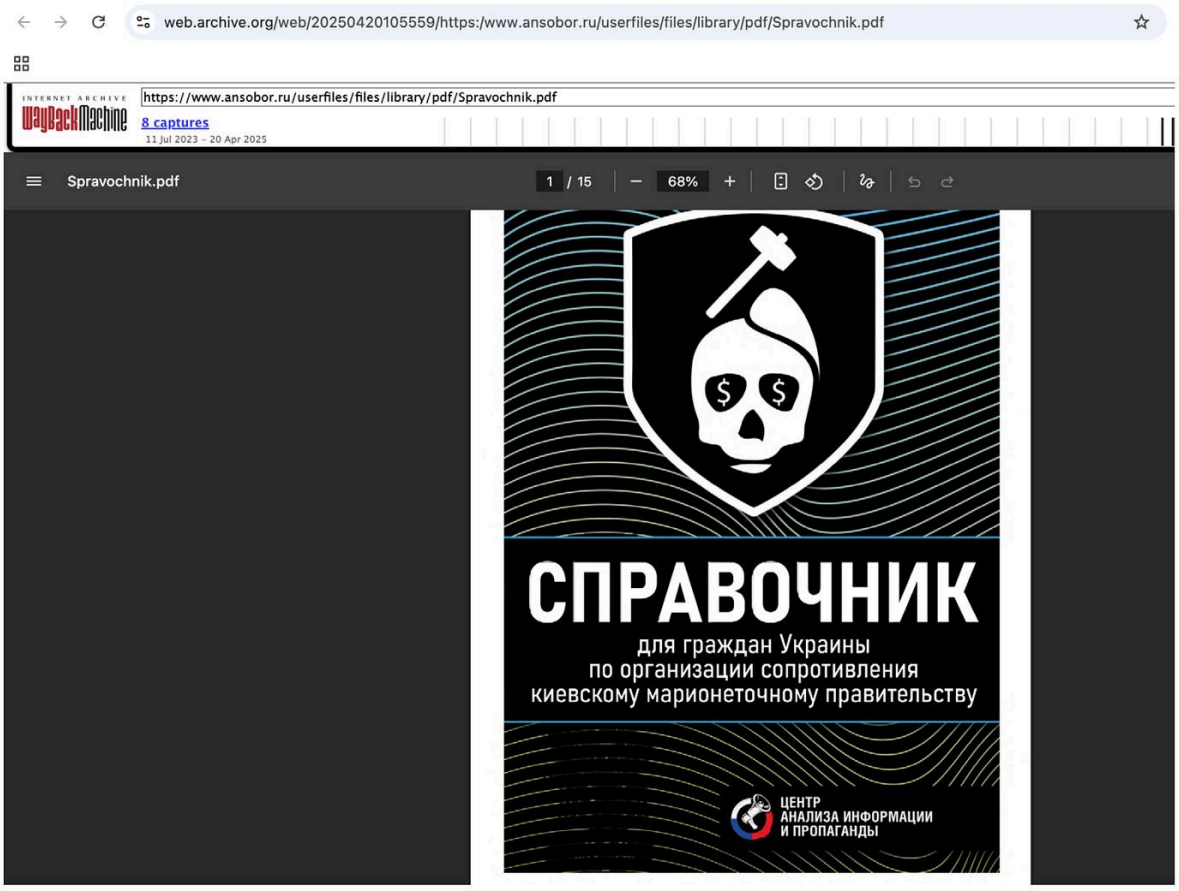
Kremensvskaya's Center for Economic and Legal Research listed the website antisekta.org among its partners [31]. The website antisekta.org itself promoted Russian anti-cult literature and Dvorkin's materials [32]. Kremensvskaya's materials were posted on the "To the Truth" website and other platforms associated with the Russian anti-cult community [33], [34].

A key hub is the website of the missionary department of the Novosibirsk Diocese, linked to Alexander Novopashin, vice president of RACIRS and Dvorkin's closest associate. In 2019, this website published material in defense of the Ukrainian Irina Kremenovskaya and the Russian Alexander Neveev [29].



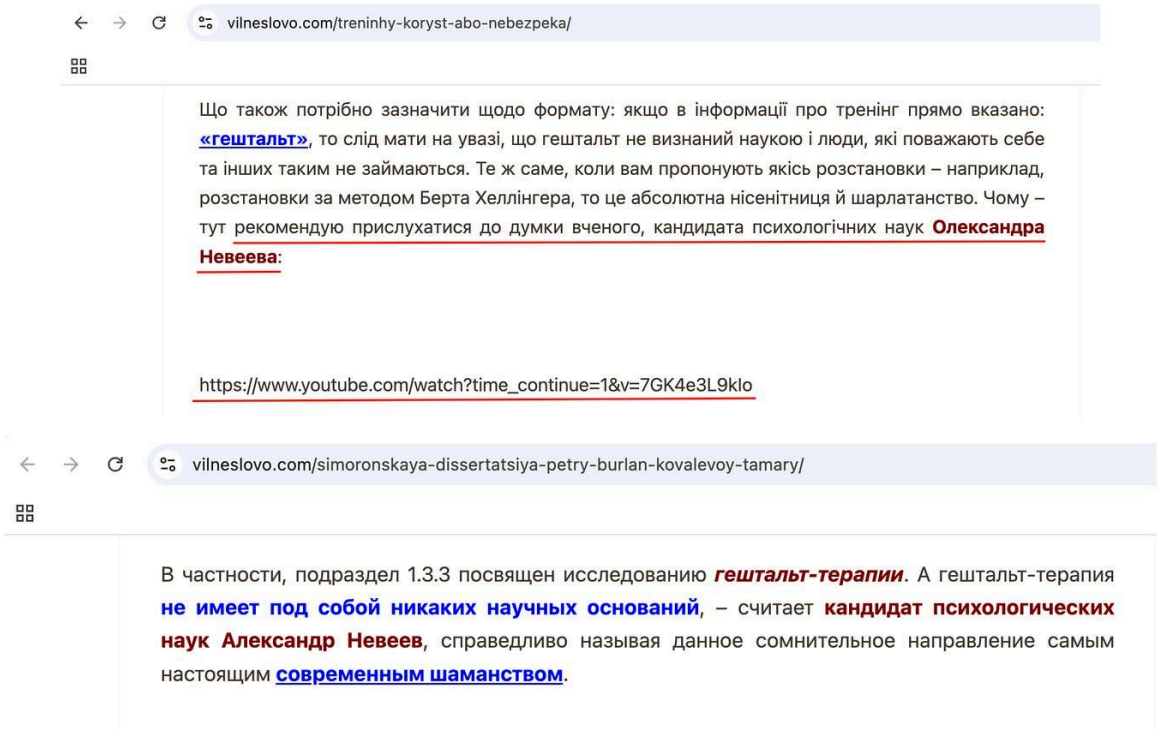
In 2025, already during the full-scale war, the same Russian resource again respectfully cited Irina Kremenovskaya as an expert [30].

The same website also hosted a methodological text directed against the Ukrainian state—“A Handbook for Ukrainian Citizens on Organizing Resistance to the Kyiv Puppet Government” [27].

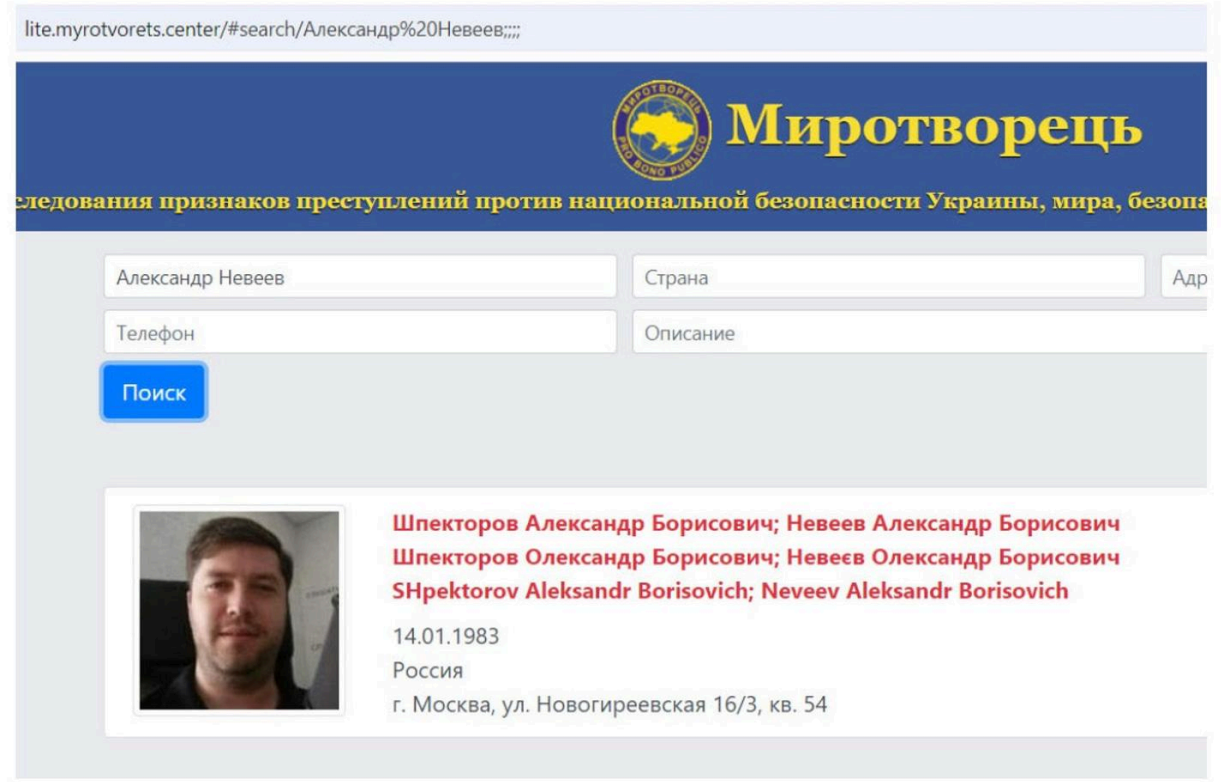


This combination cannot be dismissed as a coincidence: a website that hosts a manual on sabotage against Ukraine simultaneously defends Kremenovskaya and Neveev, and then in 2025 again points to Kremenovskaya as an authoritative source [27], [29], [30]. In wartime, such overlap is a matter of national security.

A separate thread involves Alexander Neveev. Kremenovskaya recommended him on her platforms, even though his anti-Ukrainian stance was public and radical [36], [37].



Neveev is listed in the “Mirotvorets” database [41].



His publications and related Russian materials promoted narratives about the Maidan, the “demonization” of Ukraine, the need for “de-demonization,” as well as accusations against the West and the U.S. [38], [39], [40], [42], [43].

In 2021, Neveev spoke out against “ALLATRA” on a Russian federal channel [48].

A still from a video aired on the Russian state-run channel "Pervy" in a defamatory report about "ALLATRA" on September 11, 2021, in which Alexander Neveev characterized "ALLATRA" using rhetoric identical to that of Kremenovskaya—rhetoric that echoes the line of RACIRS.

At the same time in Ukraine, Irina Kremenovskaya was pursuing the same line against "ALLATRA," constantly visiting law enforcement agencies and preparing expert reports [59], [35].

Thus, a triangle is formed: Dvorkin and RACIRS as the ideological center; Novopashin as the Russian church-anti-cult hub; Kremenovskaya and Neveev as synchronized executors of a single agenda in Ukraine and Russia.

In Russia, “ALLATRA” is declared pro-Ukrainian and dangerous to the Russian Federation; in Ukraine, they try to portray it as pro-Russian. The accusations are opposite, but the goal is the same: to destroy trust in the international civic platform, divert state resources, and disrupt “ALLATRA’s” international activities, which are beneficial to Ukraine.

The “ALLATRA” Case: How an Anti-Cult Network Diverted Ukrainian Authorities

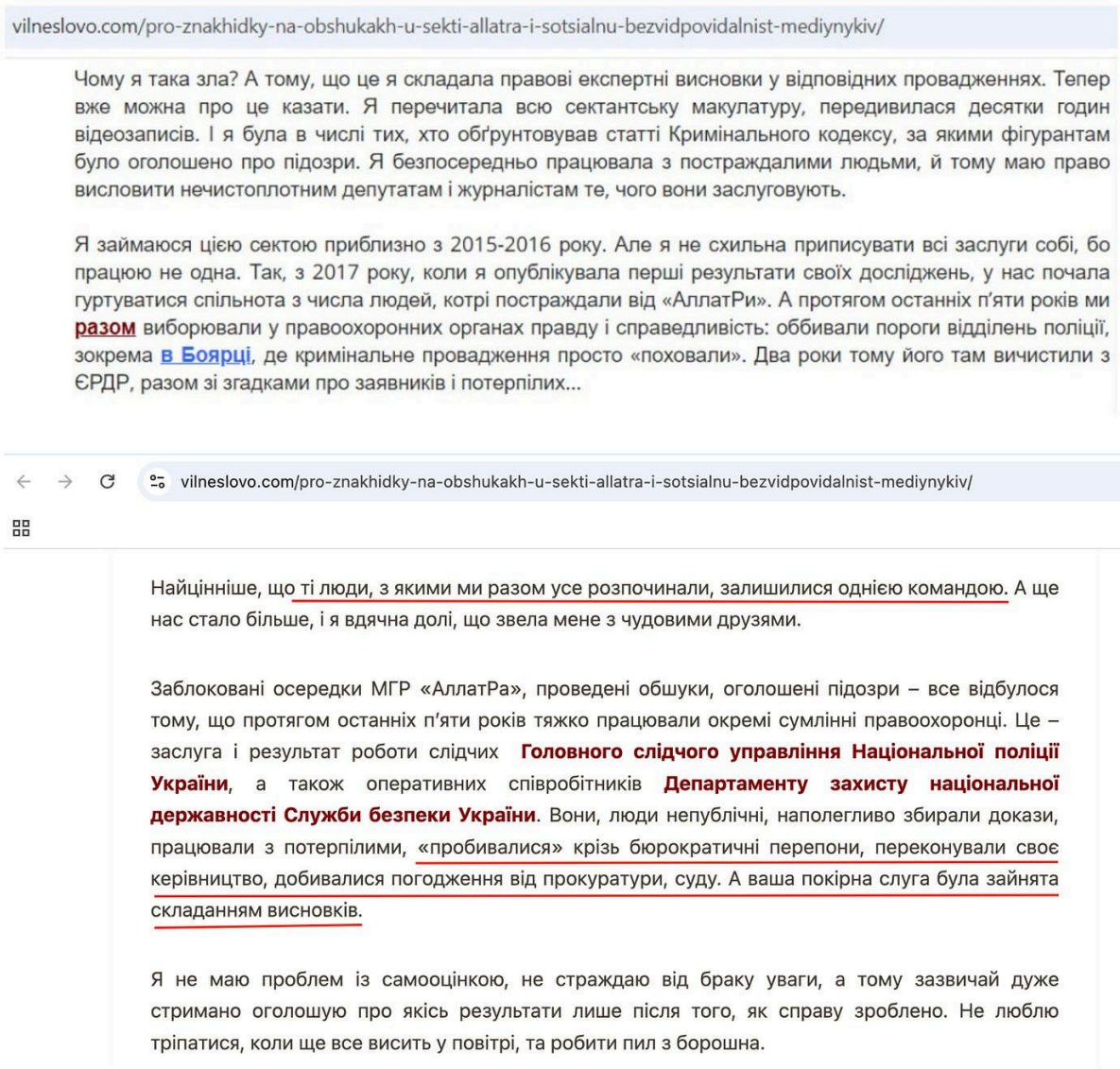
The campaign against the international civic platform “ALLATRA” began long before 2023. The first defamatory article appeared in 2015 on a website affiliated with the Moscow Patriarchate [44].

The first high-profile defamatory article targeting the international civic platform "ALLATRA" on a website affiliated with the Moscow Patriarchate, 2015. Source: [44].

It was then reposted on the main RACIRS internet platform—the website of the Center of Irenaeus of Lyons—as well as on the Novosibirsk RACIRS hub and on a Ukrainian apologetic resource that was part of the Russian anti-cult network in Ukraine [45], [46], [47].

This marked the start of a dehumanization campaign. In Ukraine, “ALLATRA” had for years been labeled a “pro-Russian sect” and “FSB agents.” In Russia, conversely, it was called “pro-Ukrainian” and linked to Ukrainian intelligence services. The mirroring of accusations is the main proof of the technology: according to the logic of the anti-cult network in each country, the organization was supposed to appear as a traitor to that very country.

In 2022, Novopashin gave a lecture titled “AllatRa: Eco-Friendly New Age,” published on the resources of the Center of Irenaeus of Lyons [49]. Neveev spoke out against Allatra on a Russion federal channel [48]. In Ukraine, Irina Kremenovskaya, according to her own publications, has been involved in this issue since 2015– 2016 (it was during this period that the first defamatory materials against the “ALLATRA” platform appeared on websites affiliated with the Moscow Patriarchate). Since 2017, Irina Kremenovskaya has filed reports with the police, prepared materials for court, drafted expert justifications, and interacted with law enforcement officials [35], [59].



vilneslovo.com/pro-znakhidky-na-obshukakh-u-sekti-allatra-i-sotsialnu-bezvidpovidalnist-mediynykiv/

Чому я така зла? А тому, що це я складала правові експертні висновки у відповідних провадженнях. Тепер вже можна про це казати. Я перечитала всю сектантську макулатуру, передивилася десятки годин відеозаписів. І я була в числі тих, хто обґрунтовував статті Кримінального кодексу, за якими фігурантам було оголошено про підозри. Я безпосередньо працювала з постраждалими людьми, й тому маю право висловити нечистоплотним депутатам і журналістам те, чого вони заслуговують.

Я займаюся цією сектою приблизно з 2015-2016 року. Але я не схильна приписувати всі заслуги собі, бо працюю не одна. Так, з 2017 року, коли я опублікувала перші результати своїх досліджень, у нас почала гуртуватися спільнота з числа людей, котрі постраждали від «АллатРи». А протягом останніх п'яти років ми **разом** виборювали у правоохоронних органах правду і справедливість: оббивали пороги відділень поліції, зокрема **в Боярці**, де кримінальне провадження просто «поховали». Два роки тому його там вичистили з ЄРДР, разом зі згадками про заявників і потерпілих...

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Найцінніше, що ті люди, з якими ми разом усе розпочинали, залишилися однією командою. А ще нас стало більше, і я вдячна долі, що звела мене з чудовими друзями.

Заблоковані осередки МГР «АллатРа», проведені обшуки, оголошені підозри – все відбулося тому, що протягом останніх п'яти років тяжко працювали окремі сумлінні правоохоронці. Це – заслуга і результат роботи слідчих **Головного слідчого управління Національної поліції України**, а також оперативних співробітників **Департаменту захисту національної державності Служби безпеки України**. Вони, люди непублічні, наполегливо збирали докази, працювали з потерпілими, «пробивалися» крізь бюрократичні перепони, переконували своє керівництво, добивалися погодження від прокуратури, суду. А ваша покірна слуга була зайнята складанням висновків.

Я не маю проблем із самооцінкою, не страждаю від браку уваги, а тому зазвичай дуже стримано оголошую про якісь результати лише після того, як справу зроблено. Не люблю тріпатися, коли ще все висить у повітрі, та робити пил з борошна.

Quotes from Irina Kremenovskaya in which she confirms that she is the initiator of criminal proceedings against members of the international civil platform "ALLATRA," the author of forensic expert reports and justifications, and the person who actively lobbied for the persecution of "ALLATRA" in Ukraine. Source: [59].

In Kremenovskaya's public account, this appears to be an admission of her long-standing efforts to exert pressure on "ALLATRA": she speaks of preparing materials, appeals, judicial and expert actions, as well as of the people involved in anti-cult activities with whom they all started out, and of law enforcement officials who persuaded their leadership to launch the case against "ALLATRA" in Ukraine [35], [59].

In the context of war, such activities should be assessed not merely as a personal antipathy toward a single organization, but **as the creation of a channel through which narratives and scenarios of Russian origin entered the Ukrainian system of forceful response.**

On August 8, 2023, the General Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation declared ALLATRA's activities undesirable on Russian territory. The Russian side claimed that ALLATRA discredits federal and regional authorities and disseminates information that discredits the Russian Federation's armed forces [50], [51]. Russian anti-cult resources separately highlighted **the role of State Duma Deputy Yana Lantratova** in the "ALLATRA" case [52]. At the same time, Ukrainian and international sources link Lantratova to the case of the illegal removal of Ukrainian children from Kherson; and in 2026, she became Russia's Human Rights Ombudsman, which caused a separate stir [53], [54].

A few months after the ban on "ALLATRA" in Russia, **on November** 1**, 2023, mass raids were conducted** against volunteers **in Ukraine**—about 70 raids across the country, involving the National Police and the SBU, with extensive media coverage [55], [56], [57], [58]. It was here that the resource trap became apparent. While Ukraine is waging a war for independence and the preservation of statehood, **the**

valuable time of investigators, operatives, courts, experts, and the media was drawn into a case that grew out of a long-standing anti-cult campaign initiated by the platforms of the Moscow Patriarchate and RACIRS [44], [45], [46], [47], [59].

This is precisely the mechanism that expert Soldatov referred to in relation to France: a conflict created at little cost forces the security services to expand their operations, expend resources, and divert their attention from **actual Russian activities and intelligence operations** [1].

On February 25, 2026, the Sixth Administrative Court of Appeal in Kyiv confirmed the legality of ALLATRA's activities, finding no grounds provided for by law to ban or forcibly dissolve the organization. Furthermore, the court affirmed the patriotic nature of ALLATRA's activities in Ukraine [60], [62].

Thus, the court found no evidence that "ALLATRA" engaged in unlawful, anti-Ukrainian, or "pro-Russian" activities. On the contrary, the court noted that "ALLATRA's" activities were in compliance with the provisions of its Charter and Ukrainian law.

The prohibitive logic, accusatory arguments, and expert analysis prepared by Irina Kremenovskaya and her center did not stand up to judicial scrutiny.

European Continuation: Luigi Corvaglia, the Czech Network, the BBC, and the Attempt to Undermine ALLATRA's Legitimacy

The European campaign against “ALLATRA” unfolded in waves. **In 2022, the BBC published a report that cited the position of the Chelyabinsk Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church**—a Russian church source linked to anti-cult infrastructure—at a time when Russia was already waging a full-scale war against Ukraine [64].

Then the Czech-Slovak media picked up on the narrative about a “pro-Russian sect” and a “threat to security” [65].

The third wave is linked to Luigi Corvaglia—an Italian anti-cult activist, member of FECRIS, and Dvorkin’s closest ally in European circles. He participated in the 2018 Riga conference alongside Dvorkin, Mamykine, and others [8]. Later, he served as an expert in European publications opposing “ALLATRA” [66], [67].

All of these activities by the anti-cult network harm not only the reputation of “ALLATRA.” The network’s members are also attempting to thwart the platform’s entry into international arenas. This is **the purpose of the attack: to prevent the Ukrainian-origin international civic platform “ALLATRA” from speaking out on a global level not only about the climate, the threat of micro- and nanoplastics, human rights, and religious freedom, but also about support for Ukraine.**

It is telling that in the European Parliament, the attempt by individuals involved in this agenda to portray “ALLATRA” as a pro-Russian threat was unsuccessful. **The minutes of the European Parliament’s Quaestors dated April 29, 2026, state that parliamentary services found no convincing or unequivocal evidence to**

support complaints regarding pro-Russian narratives by "ALLATRA" and links to Russian disinformation ecosystems that could lead to the misuse of Parliament premises or jeopardize its reputation [83].

What exactly they were trying to disrupt: ALLATRA's activities in support of Ukraine

The international civic platform "ALLATRA" has publicly condemned Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, advocates for the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity, and promotes the Ukrainian position in international forums in the U.S., the EU, and other countries [68].

In the U.S., ALLATRA operated through public diplomacy, engaging with Congress, the Senate, religious leaders, and representatives of the expert community [69], [70], [71], [72].

On January 22, 2026, "ALLATRA," together with Pastor Mark Burns, held the conference "United in Liberty: The Rise of Spiritual Diplomats" at the U.S. Capitol complex in Washington. Speakers included Congressman Gus Bilirakis, Matt Schlapp, Congressman Joe Wilson, Congressman Mark Harris, and others; U.S. President Donald Trump delivered a special video message recorded for the conference [69], [70].

On February 5, 2026, a conference in support of Ukraine titled "Freedom Has a Name and It's Called Ukraine" took place, featuring representatives from American, Ukrainian, and religious circles, including members of the Ukrainian Parliament,

Chief Rabbi of Kyiv and Ukraine Moshe Reuven Asman, and other participants [71], [72].

At the same time, “ALLATRA” is developing scientific and human rights activities: the ALLATRA Global Research Center, materials on microplastics, participation in UN climate forums, COP29, COP30, the forum marking the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act at the UN in Vienna, speeches on human rights, and a conference in the European Parliament on the topic of nanoplastics [73], [74], [76], [77], [78], [79], [80].

The Vatican connection is also significant: “ALLATRA” reported on the apostolic blessing of Pope Francis in 2024 and the blessing of Pope Leo XIV in 2025 [81], [82].

This is precisely why an attack on the international civic platform “ALLATRA” benefits Russia. **The blow is aimed at a pro-Ukrainian civic initiative that conducts international activities in support of Ukraine and works closely with democratic partners abroad.** The goal of such a campaign against “ALLATRA” is not to protect society, as the anti-cult network tries to portray it, but to paralyze an international civic platform that is beneficial to Ukraine through slander, pressure, searches, trials, and the involvement of special services in an artificially created anti-cult agenda. As a result, state resources are being diverted not toward identifying actual Russian agents, but toward serving a scenario that benefits Moscow: discrediting “ALLATRA,” weakening its external activities, and depriving Ukraine of yet another civil channel of international support.

Final conclusion: the anti-cult network is not a marginal phenomenon, but a threat infrastructure

The collected cases do not form a chain of random coincidences, but a recurring pattern.

In the French-Serbian episode, religious hatred became a tool of an operation linked in court documents to Russian intelligence structures; the figure of Momčilo Gajić led to a church-anti-cult network [1], [9], [11], [12]. In Latvia, the anti-cult agenda intersected with pro-Russian political networks and the figures of Tatjana Zhdanoka, Andrei Mamikin, Evgeny Elkin, and Nikita Nikiforov [6], [7], [8], [89], [90], [91], [92], [93]. In Lithuania, former KGB officer Nikolai Ryzhak, a proponent of repressive measures against "destructive sects," was identified as a figure inciting discord and posing a threat to Lithuania's national security [13], [14], [15]. In Ukraine, the "Dvorkin–Broide–Surkov" line demonstrated how anti-cult and religious circles were utilized in projects of Russian hybrid warfare: through the media, regional agendas, religious structures, and orchestrated campaigns of division [18], [19].

Against this backdrop, Irina Kremenovskaya's activities and the coordinated attack on the international civic platform "ALLATRA" no longer appear to be a matter of personal antipathy toward a single organization. This is a continuation of the same logic: the same terminology of "sects" and "destructive cults," the same intersections with Dvorkin, Novopashin, and Neveev, the same struggle against the Ukrainian model of religious pluralism as a whole, and the same attempt to drag the state into a forceful reaction to an artificially created "internal threat" [24], [29], [30], [35], [59].

Anti-cult activity in this scheme is not a religious studies discussion. It is a technology of political influence.

The “ALLATRA” case is particularly important precisely because it illustrates this mechanism in detail. In Russia, “ALLATRA” is persecuted as a pro-Ukrainian and anti-Russian organization; in Ukraine, the anti-cult network attempted to portray it as pro-Russian; European nodes of the same milieu attempted to use the Ukrainian case as a ready-made argument for international discrediting. Meanwhile, the international civic platform “ALLATRA” continues to publicly support Ukraine and operate on international platforms [50], [51], [55], [56], [57], [58], [68], [69], [70], [71], [72], [83].

Therefore, the anti-cult network in the described scheme is not a marginal group of “anti-cult activists,” but a threat infrastructure. It stirs up discord, divides society, undermines trust in democratic institutions, interferes with freedom of conscience, distracts law enforcement, and weakens civic initiatives that support Ukraine. For Ukraine and Western countries, this is a matter of national security: such a network helps Moscow bring the war into democratic societies—in the form of suspicion, legal overburdening, media hysteria, and orchestrated division.

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